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Chief Justice Clark of North Carolina, under the title "Old Foes With New Faces," discusses the methods of lawless wealth, and considers that taxation and "public ownership" may give relief to the body politic now suffering from "economic indigestion"; while Mr. J. F. Bullitt treats "Trusts and Labor Unions" from the standpoint of evolution. Carefully prepared are the historical papers of Mr. A. Caperton Braxton on "The Fifteenth Amendment—An Account of its Enactment," and of Mr. John Goode on "The Electoral Commission of 1877." It was, by the way, quite evident to those who listened to Mr. Braxton's graceful address of welcome to the American Bar Association that Virginia eloquence is as enduring as Virginia hospitality.

The volume also contains a report by the special committee on the "Torrens System" with the draft of an act "To provide for the settlement, registration, transfer and assurance of titles to land, and to establish the court of land registration, with jurisdiction throughout the commonwealth." Whatever criticism may be made of this act, it can not be said to be long, and in view of the one hundred and more sections of the Illinois act, the description of the Virginia draft as "a somewhat lengthy bill of 59 sections" (*Chicago Legal News*, Nov. 21, 1903,) is rather amusing. It is, indeed, a model of brevity. Committees having similar work to perform in other states may profitably study this bill, for, while it contains much that is appropriate to Virginia alone, it is suggestive as to what may be done in any state.

The prosperous condition of the Virginia association is probably largely due to the fact that for half its life it has had one man of the right sort as secretary treasurer. A bar association secretary should be just such a man as the Virginians have been able to keep so long in office—able and affable, patient and painstaking.

J. H. BREWSTER

THE ART OF CROSS-EXAMINATION, By Francis L. Wellman, of the New York Bar, New York. Pages, 283. The Macmillan Company, 1903.

This book cannot, strictly speaking, be called a professional work, although the author in the preface speaks of offering it to the legal profession. No attempt has been made to treat the subject from a scientific point of view or in an exhaustive manner. The aim of the author has been rather to give to the reader certain practical suggestions upon the art of cross-examination, and to supplement these with examples of cross-examinations by some of the great masters of the art, both English and American. The book opens with an introduction, in which the author refers to the changes in the character and methods of professional work that the last fifty years have witnessed, and advocates as a remedy for the delays, uncertainties, and congested calendars that come from the trial of causes being so largely given into the hands of inexperienced men, something like the English system of distinction between barrister and solicitor. The chapters that follow treat of the manner and matter of cross-examination, contain suggestions as to methods of dealing with witnesses who are suspected of perjury, discuss the cross-examination of experts, and the sequence of cross-examination. One chapter is given to cross-examination as to credit and its abuses. Chapter ten contains a most interesting account of some famous cross-examiners and their methods. The author expresses the belief that it is "decidedly

helpful to the students of the art of cross-examination to have placed before them . . . some good illustrations of the methods of well-known cross-examiners as exhibited in actual practice in the cross-examination of important witnesses in famous trials." He, therefore, devotes the last five chapters of his book to the cross-examination of important witnesses as developed in several well-known cases. The situation under which the cross-examination was conducted in each case, is fully explained, and such leading facts in the case as the reader must understand in order to appreciate the questions involved, are given. Following the necessary introductory matter are copious extracts from the cross-examination as it actually was conducted upon the trial. Among the most interesting and instructive of these chapters is the one devoted to the cross-examination of Richard Pigott, by Sir Charles Russell before the Parnell Commission. The cross-examination of Russell Sage by Mr. Joseph H. Choate, in the Laidlaw-Sage case, with which the book closes, is given by Mr. Wellman as an example "of what the court of appeals of New York has decided to be an abuse of cross-examination, into which, through their zeal, even eminent counsel are sometimes led."

The author's long experience in a varied court practice gives to his suggestions special significance, while his method of statement challenges attention from the beginning of the book to the end. Mr. Wellman's work will undoubtedly appeal to the general reader as well as to the lawyer and the law student, for the book is essentially a popular description of an art that is, in a sense at least, dramatic in its nature, and it incidentally offers an opportunity for the study of controlling motives that one rarely meets with in the printed page. The law student will find the book not only highly entertaining, but valuable for the practical information that it contains, its excellent illustrations, and from the point of view of legal ethics. Its reading by the student, however, should follow systematic instruction in the law of evidence.

H. B. HUTCHINS

THE TORRENS SYSTEM. Its cost and complexity. A legal and practical treatise with references to the English and Victorian land transfer acts and to the Torrens acts of Illinois, California, Massachusetts, Oregon, Minnesota and Colorado. By William C. Niblack of the Chicago Bar, pages 205. Chicago, Callaghan & Company, 1903.

The sub-title of this volume indicates that the author regards the Torrens system as costly and complex, and in his preface he frankly states that his judgment may be affected by the fact that he has been for twelve years a stockholder and an officer and attorney of the Chicago Title and Trust Company, whose business, he admits, would be lessened and injured by the general adoption of the system. Following the discussion of some 160 pages is an appendix containing the text of the Illinois Torrens Law, and a form of one of the title insurance policies of the author's Company.

As many advocates of the Torrens system are mistaken, it would seem, in assuming it to be an absolutely perfect system, so, also, it appears, are its opponents mistaken in assuming that there are no just grounds for complaint against our present general recording system.